

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 IO-03

PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 NEA-06

EUR-10 DPW-01 AID-10 RSR-01 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

/086 W

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O R 151100Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6000

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

CINCPAC

CDRUSAAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI

USDAO/SAIGON/AOSOP-OR

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 14767/1

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJ: SITREP

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE

EMBASSY AS OF 1800 AUGUST 15, AND COVERS THE PERIOD SINCE THE LAST SITREP AUGUST 13.

SUMMARY: THE ICCS CHAIRMAN HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY INFORMED THAT IRAN WILL BECOME THE FOURTH ICCS MEMBER. IN THE FPJMT, BOTH THE DRV AND PRG WERE UNRESPONSIVE CONCERNING REPATRIATION OF THE REMAINS OF DEAD US POWS. THERE WAS NO PROGRESS ON ANY ISSUE UNDER DISCUSSION IN THE TPJMC. ACTIVITY IN MR 1 WAS LIMITED TO ATTACKS BY FIRE AND HARASSMENTS. A COMBINATION OF ENEMY ACTIVITY AND TOUGH TERRAIN CASTS DOUBT ON ARVN ABILITY TO COMPLETE THE ROAD TO A STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT OB (BACH MA MOUNTAIN) BEFORE THE RAINY SEASON HALTS AERIAL RESUPPLY. GVN OFFICIALS OF TRA BONG DISTRICT IN QUANG NGAI WERE REPORTEDLY ARRESTED FOR ENGAGING IN ILLICIT TRADE WITH THE PRG. ACTIVITY WAS HEAVY IN BINH DINH, PLEIKU, AND KONTUM PROVINCES IN MR 2. AN NVA ATTACK TO RETAKE POSITIONS RECENTLY SEIZED BY ARVN NEAR TRUNG NGHIA WAS REPULSED. ACTIVITY REMAINED AT A MODERATE LEVEL IN MR 3, BUT GVN CASUALTIES WERE LIGHT. IN MR 4, INCIDENTS REMAIN UP, PARTICULARLY IN WESTERN DINH TUONG PROVINCE. ACTIVITY IN CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE SLACKENED.

PART I ICCS

AMB DHARSONO, ICCS CHAIRMAN FOR AUGUST, WAS OFFICIALLY INFORMED THIS MORNING THAT IRAN WOULD BE TAKING CANADA'S PLACE AS THE FOURTH ICCS MEMBER. DHARSONO EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE.

PART II FPJMT

THE AUGUST 14 FPJMT MEETING WAS AGAIN A FRUITLESS SESSION. THE DRV AND PRG DELEGATIONS WERE UNRESPONSIVE TO SPECIFIC USDEL REQUESTS FOR DRV REACTION TO US-PROPOSED PROCEDURES FOR REPATRIATING THE REMAINS OF US DIED -IN-CAPTIVITY FROM NVN AND FOR INFORMATION ON THE SCHEDULING OF A PRG-PROPOSED FPJMT VISIT TO US GRAVES IN PRG TERRITORY. THERE WAS FURTHER INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION OF BUILDING CEMETERIES AND MEMORIALS. THE PRG AND DRV BOTH TURNED DOWN AN RVN INVITATION FOR AN AUG 17 VISIT TO TWO PRG GRAVES IN A CIVILIAN CEMETERY 15 TO 20 KMS FROM SAIGON. THE PRG OBJECTED TO THE RVN INVITATION BEING CONDITIONAL ON THE PRG EXTENDING A SIMILAR INVITATION, AND THE DRV OBJECTED TO THE RVN REFUSAL TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PROVIDE EXACT LOCATION OF THE GRAVES.

PART III TPJMC

THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER PROGRESS ON ANY ISSUE CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION IN THE TPJMC. THE PRG DELEGATION READ VERBATIM A SIX-PAGE INSTRUCTION FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS, BUT THIS NEW COMMUNICATION WAS MERELY A REPEAT OF PREVIOUS HARD-LINE,

PROPAGANDA-ORIENTED DOCUMENTS.

PART IV MR 1

1. THE 15 REPORTED CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS CONSISTED ENTIRELY OF ATTACKS-BY-FIRE (ABF) AND HARASSMENTS. GVN CASUALTIES WERE 10 KIA AND 56 WIA AND NVA/VC CASUALTIES 60 KIA. THERE WERE TWO RETURNEES. CORPS G-2 REPORTS THAT THE ENEMY HAS STATIONED ONE BN OF THE 5TH NVA REGT EAST OF BACK MA MOUNTAIN IN EASTERN THUA THIEN PROVINCE TO STEP UP HARASSMENT OF RVN ROAD-BUILDING EFFORT S, WHICH HAVE BEEN SLOWED CONSIDERABLY IN THE PAST WEEK BY ENEMY MINING AND SNIPER ATTACKS AND BY TH MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TERRAIN FOR THE ARVN ENGINEERS. CONGEN COMMENTS THAT IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY THAT THE ROAD WILL BE FINISHED BEFORE THE RAINY SEASON BEGINS AND WEATHER PRECLUDES HELICOPTER RESUPPLY MISSIONS, WHICH ARE ALREADY DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF ENEMY AA IN THE AREA. IN THAT EVENT, THE RF BATTALION WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO GIVE UP ITS STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT OB ON THE MOUNTAINTOP.

2. REPORTS OF ILLICIT TRADE WITH THE ENEMY LED GENERAL TRUONG TO CUT OFF RICE DELIVERIES TO QUANG NGAI'S TRA BONG DISTRICT FOUR WEEKS AGO AND HAVE RESULTED IN THE DETENTION OF THE DISTRICT CHIEF AND HIS S-1, S-2, AND S-3. ON 14 AUGUST, GENERAL LAC, DPTY MR 1 COMMANDER, AND BG NHUAN FROM MSS IN SAIGON CONFERRED WITH THE PROVINCE CHIEF, WHO WILL BE SENDING A DELEGATION TO TRA BONG TO INVESTIGATE THE RICE-FOR-CINNAMON TRADE WIT THE PRG.

3. THE THUA THIEN DPTY PROVINCE CHIEF REPORTEDLY BELIEVES THAT THE PRICE OF RICE HAS STABILIZED FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS. HOWEVER, HIS ESTIMATE OF A 20 TO 30 PER CENT LOSS IN THE SEPT RICE CROP AS A RESULT OF THE RECENT TYPHOON IS MORE PSSSIMISTIC THAN THE 10 PER CENT LOSS PREVIOUSLY PREDICTED BY OTHER PROVINCE

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OFFICIALS. IN ANTICIPATION OF FUTURE SHORTAGES, HE HAS ORDERED THAT A PROVINCIAL RICE RESERVE OF 2,000 TONS BE MAINTAINED. HE ALSO PLANS AGAIN THIS YEAR TO PREVENT RICE BEING BOUGHT UP BY MERCHANTS FROM OUT OF THE PROVINCE. IN HIS OPINION, VC RICE PROCUREMENT HAS BEEN MINIMAL AND IS NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

PART V MR 2

MILITARY IN MR 2 REMAINED RELATIVELY HIGH OVER THE PAST 48 HOURS. THERE WERE 40 INCIDENTS REPORTED, MOST OF THEM NVA/VC ABF. INCIDENTS WERE CONCENTRATED IN BINH DINH, KONTUM, AND PLEIKU: ALL ENEMY LOSSES AND VIRTUALLY ALL GVN CASUALTIES WERE IN THESE SAME PROVINCES. CASUALTIES REMAINED HEAVY ON BOTH SIDES: VC/NVA 76 KIA AND ONE CAPTURED; RVNAF AND POLICE 27 KIA AND JSP WIAM AIR STRIKES HAVE DIMINISHED SHARPLY OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS. AT

TRUNG NGHIA IN KONTUM PROVINCE, THE ENEMY ATTACKED THE 1ST BN OF THE 45TH REGT ON THE EVENING OF AUG 13 IN AN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO RETAKE THE FIRST-LINE ENEMY POSITIONS WHICH THE 45TH HAD TAKEN AUGUST 9-10. THIS ATTACK WAS REPULSED, AND THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORT OF ANY SUBSEQUENT ENEMY ATTACKS. IN BINH DINH, IT IS REPORTED THAT THE NVA 2ND REGT HAS RECEIVED ORDERS TO CONTINUE ITS ATTACKS AGAINST RVNAF POSITIONS IN THE NORTHEASTERN PART OF THE PROVINCE THROUGH AUGUST 19.

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PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 NEA-06

EUR-10 DPW-01 AID-10 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 RSR-01

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O R 151100Z AUG 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6001
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
CINCPAC
CDRUSAAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE
COMUSMACHTAI
USDAO/SAIGON/AOSOP-OR
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 14767/2

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PART VI MR 3

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY STAYED AT THE SAME LEVEL WITH MR 3 G-2 REPORTING 31 MILITARY CLASHES DURING THE 48-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0800 AUGUST 15. 18 CLASHES WERE REPORTED IN THE FIRST 24 HOUR PERIOD AND 13 WERE REPORTED IN THE SECOND. THERE WERE TEN GROUND ATTACKS, THREE SMALL ARMS HARASSMENTS AND NINE MINING/ GRENADE DETONATIONS. TOTAL GVN LOSSES FOR THE PERIOD WERE THREE KILLED, 27 WOUNDED (ONE CIVILIAN) AND ONE RIVER PATROL BOAT SLIGHTLY DAMAGED. COMMUNIST LOSSES FOR THE SAME PERIOD WERE SIX KIA.

2. THE HEAVIEST CLASH TOOK PLACE AUGUST 13, 1 KM S PHU KHUNG, TAY NINH PROVINCE WHERE AN RF COMPANY RECEIVED 45 ROUNDS MORTAR AND GROUND ATTACK BY UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE. RF LOSS WAS ONE KILLED, FOUR WOUNDED WHILE VC/NVA SUSTAINED ONE KIA. A SPECIAL POLICE TEAM 5 KM NW OF DI AN, BIEN HOA PROVINCE SUFFERED ONE KILLED, FOUR WOUNDED, AUG 13, WHEN A HAND GRENADE WAS TOSSED BY A TERRORIST.

3. ON THE NIGHT OF AUG 12, VC SPREAD 10 LEAFLETS IN A HAMLET 2 KM NW KHIEM CUONG, HAU NGHIA PROVINCE. THE SUBJECT OF THE LEAFLETS WAS A REQUEST FOR HAU NGHIA SECTOR COMMANDER'S REPRESENTATIVE TO MEET THE PRG CONCERNING DELINEATION OF AREAS OF CONTROL.

4. NOW THAT SECOND TRANCHE OF INDONESIANS IS IN PLACE, REGION V INDODEL CHIEF INFORMED THAT HE PLANS TO CALL FORM MEETING OF REGION V ICCS NEXT WEEK. IN ABSENCE OF AGREEMENT AMONG PARTIES, INDODEL WILL START INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS ALONE.

5. PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES IN PHUOC TUY INFORMED LOCAL ARRO THAT INTERPROVINCIAL ROUTE 23 FROM BA RAI TO XUYEN MOC IS STILL OPEN TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC AND CAN NOW ALSO BE USED BY MILITARY CONVOYS IF PROVIDED WITH ADVANCE ROAD CLEAVING. AUTHORITIES HOWEVER ARE CONFIDENT ENOUGH OF ROAD SECURITY TO ADVISE AMERICAN USE OF ROUTE.

6. LONG AN ARRO REPORTS INCREASING DISSATISFACTION WITH RISING RPICES. MANY PEOPLE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO BUY MEAT, FISH, SUGAR , OR MILK, AND NOW SUBSIST ENTIRELY ON RICE. ONE CIVIL

SERVANT, RECALLING THE FRENCH PERIOD, NOTED THAT THE FRENCH,
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UNLIKE THE GVN, WERE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ECONOMIC STABILITY EVEN
DURING THE WAR WITH THE VIET MINH.

PART VII MR 4

1. FOR THE WEEK OF AUG 6-14, MR 4 REPORTS 258 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS (UP SLIGHTLY FROM 239 THE PREVIOUS WEEK), INCLUDING 23 GROUND ATTACKS, 185 ABF, 32 HARASSMENTS, 13 INCIDENTS OF SABOTAGE AND 5 INCIDENTS OF INFILTRATION. CORPS REPORTS 208 SECURITY OPERATIONS, OF WHICH 84 WERE CONDUCTED BY ARVN. CORPS LOST 166 KILLED, 598 WOUNDED AND 33 MISSING. CORPS CLAIMS 392 VC KILLED AND SEVEN CAPTURED.

2. FOR THE 48-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0600 15 AUG, MR 4 REPORTS 44 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS, INCLUDING ONE GROUND ATTACK, 33 ABF, 9 HARASSMENTS, AND ONE TERRORIST ATTACK. VC ACTIVITY WAS CONCENTRATED IN DINH TUONG (WITH 10 REPORTED INCIDENTS ON AUG 14), CHAU DOC, AND CHUONG THIEN, ALTHOUGH CHUONG THIEN ACTIVITY WAS LOWER THAN NORMAL. CORPS REPORTS 30 GVN TROOPS KILLED, AND 178 WOUNDED. CORPS CLAIMS 147 VC KILLED, AND TWO CAPTURED.

3. THE PHONG DINH PROV REP COUNTS SEVEN ASSASSINATION INCIDENTS IN PHONG DINH IN JULY, ALTHOUGH CORPS HQS REPORTED ONLY TWO.

4. THE DINH TUONG PROV REP REPORTS INCREASED VC ACTIVITY INCLUDING 28 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS IN THE 48-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0630 AUG 15. (COMMENT: THIS SECTOR NUMBER IS ROUTINELY HIGHER THAN THAT REPORTED AT CORPS FIGURES IN SECTION 1 ARE CORPS FIGURES. END COMMENT) THERE WERE REPORTEDLY 14 ABF, FOUR BOOBY TRAP INCIDENTS, AND SEVEN CONTACTS DURING RF AND POLICE OPERATIONS. GVN CASUALTIES INCLUDED 12 KILLED AND 30 WOUNDED. GVN CLAIMS 18 VC KILLED. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT OCCURRED IN GIAO DUC DISTRICT, WHERE AN RF BATTALION ENCOUNTERED A VC COMPANY, RESULTING IN SEVEN KILLED AND 12 WOUNDED, AS OPPOSED TO 11 VC KILLED. SURPRISING NUMBER OF THE ABF HAVE OCCURRED DURING DAYLIGHTS HOURS IN NORTHERN CAI LAY DISTRICT, SUGGESTING THAT THE VC STRATEGY MAY BE TO FRIGHTEN GVN OUTPOST DEFENDERS IN REMAINING IN THEIR OUTPOSTS AT NIGHT TO PERMIT INCREASED VC INFILTRATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON14767
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS MARTIN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730836/aaaabakl.tel
Line Count: 323
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07-Sep-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <31-Oct-2001 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITREP CINCPAC FOR POLAD
TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005